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ABSTRACT

This investigation examined the history and durability of educational innovation at six colleges and universities (Pitzer College (California); New College of the University of South Florida; Hampshire College (Massachusetts); University of Wisconsin-Green Bay; University of California Santa Cruz; and The Evergreen State College (Washington) that were founded in the 1960s and 1970s as alternatives to mainstream American higher education. Innovation is defined as including interdisciplinary teaching and learning, student-centered education, egalitarianism, and experiential learning, with an institutional focus on teaching. The study's objective was to understand how innovative campuses preserve their founding missions in a changing social, political, and economic climate. During 4- to 6-day field visits during the 1995-96 academic year, 151 interviews were conducted with 164 faculty members, administrators, students, graduates, and trustees. Based on the findings, the following strategies are recommended to help ensure innovation in distinctive institutions of higher education: retain a significant number of founding faculty members until their retirements; recruit new faculty and administrators who are committed to innovation; establish reward systems that value innovation; provide open and flexible organizational structures; affiliate with a consortium or other institutions; recruit faculty with experience at other innovative campuses; and keep the student-to-faculty ratios small. (Contains 68 references.) (SW)

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The Innovative Colleges and Universities of the 1960s and 1970s: What Keeps the Dreams of Experimentation Alive?

This investigation examined the history and durability of educational innovation at six colleges and universities that were founded in the 1960s and 1970s as alternatives to the mainstream of American higher education. Interviews were conducted with 151 faculty members, administrators, students, alumnae/i, and trustees. The goal of the research was to understand how and why innovative campuses preserve their founding missions or dreams in a changing social, political, and economic climate.

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This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, November 6-9, 1997. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

The Innovative Colleges and Universities of the 1960s and 1970s: What Keeps the Dreams of Experimentation Alive?

Joy S. Rosenzweig, Ph.D.
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There are places I'll remember
All my life, though some have changed
Some forever, not for better,
Some have gone and some remain
All these places had their moments
With lovers and friends I still can recall . . .
In my life, I've loved them all . . .[1]
John Lennon and Paul McCartney, 1965

Background and Overview

In the 1960s and early 1970s, academic planners, reformers, countercultural gurus, faculty members, and students converged upon mountaintops, held retreats in the woods, occupied classrooms and board rooms for days at a time, to give life to new and radically different institutions of higher education. Scores of innovative or experimental colleges and subcolleges burst onto the scene against a backdrop of social and political turbulence, heated and passionate student demonstration, rapid enrollment growth, economic upswings, and countercultural lifestyle exploration.

Witness the birth of the Alternative One College at Keene State in New Hampshire; the Aquarian University, built on a "spiritual commune" in Baltimore; the Student Center College in Mendocino, California; the College Within at Tufts; and the College of the Person in Washington, D.C. There was the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, founded "in part to help the island's economy and in part to make a difference in the world" (Hall, 1994, p. 52); the Campus-Free College in Arlington, Massachusetts; the Colleges-Within-The-College at the

[1] I owe the musical reference to Jim Bebout and Tom Greening, editors of the Journal of Humanistic Psychology (Volume 21, Spring 1981), who wove John Lennon lyrics throughout the writings of this special issue on "humanistic" colleges. This particular excerpt appears in Greening (1981a), page 3.

University of Kansas; free-spirited Franconia College in the "round green mountains of New Hampshire;" and the Experimental College at Fresno State -- here students enrolled in courses on "Love and Violence," "Basic Mountaineering," and the "Practice of Yoga." There was the student-run Experimental College at San Francisco State; the neoclassical experiments at Berkeley and San Jose State; the encounter group college (Johnston) of the University of Redlands (now Johnston Center for Integrative Studies); New College in Florida; Hampshire College in Massachusetts; The Evergreen State College, a public experimental college on the outskirts of Olympia, Washington; and the University of California (UC) Santa Cruz, an innovative university that was built in the middle of a redwood forest (Coyne & Hebert, 1972; Gaff, 1970a, b; Grant & Riesman, 1978; Hall, 1991; McDonald & O'Neill, 1988; Tussman, 1969).

Most of these dazzling departures thrived in the 1960s and early 1970s, many of them attracting renowned faculty, top-notch applicants, and anti-establishment attendees. But by the mid-1970s, the years of prosperity and high hopes gave way to stagnation and decline. Friends and founders began to flee. Faculty and students ran for cover. Severe economic hardships, decreases in the rate of enrollment growth, and shifting student values (materialistic or careerist student goals and aspirations) brought an end to the age of experimentation (Cheit, 1971; Hall, 1991; Levine, 1980a, b). UC Santa Cruz began the "long, mutinous march back to the familiar lines of academic responsibility" (Adams, 1984, p. 24); Johnston College was absorbed into the University of Redlands; the phone lines were cut, the learning "huts" taken away, the office doors padlocked at the Experimental College at San Francisco State (Grand & Bebout, 1981). One by one, the bold new campuses began to close their doors or to abandon their visions of educational innovation.

When the storm cleared and the enrollments stabilized, only a few beautiful little experiments were left intact or operational (e.g., College of the Atlantic, Hampshire College, The

Evergreen State College). What kept these imaginative ventures healthy and strong? What are some of the keys to the survival or longevity of academic innovations?

While previous researchers have tried their hands at explaining or accounting for why the innovative higher education movement lost its momentum, and why some distinctive campuses abandoned their early visions or simply collapsed while others endured or succeeded, there have been no recent empirical investigations that have examined these phenomena across institutions. With few exceptions (e.g., Grant & Riesman, 1978; Levine & Weingart, 1973), the bulk of the writings in this creative corner of the higher education literature are non-empirical pieces (memoirs, personal thoughts, and reflections) usually based on a single campus experience (e.g., Anzulovic, 1976; Coyne, 1972; Grand & Bebout, 1981; Kahn, 1981; Ruopp & Jerome, 1973). Systematic investigations that contemplate the question of how and why innovative colleges and universities sustain or transform their distinctive founding missions are few and far between.

This study attempted to fill this void in the research literature. In order to gain insight into the history and endurance of institutional innovations in higher education, four- to five-day site visits were conducted to six distinctive colleges and universities across the United States in the 1995-96 academic year. The six institutions were Pitzer College in Claremont, California; New College of the University of South Florida in Sarasota; Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts; University of Wisconsin (UW)-Green Bay; University of California, Santa Cruz; and The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington.

This paper offers an overview of the investigation and reviews the key findings of the campus case studies. It begins with a definition of innovation and innovative colleges and universities. The next section reviews the research questions that guided the study. The paper goes on to describe the methodological design, the institutional selection process and data gathering techniques. This is followed by a discussion of the case study results and the

cross-campus findings and implications. The paper concludes with suggestions for future studies of alternative colleges and universities.

Definition: What is an Innovative College or University?

It is a challenge to grasp, put your fingers around, touch and feel the idea of innovation in higher education (Townsend, Newell, & Wiese, 1992). Different authors conceptualize reform in different ways, and there are "a cornucopia of typologies to choose from" (Levine, 1980b, p. 4). There are those who single out alternative campuses for their out-of-the-ordinary programs, their "wacky," "handmade," "one-of-a-kind" designs -- e.g., the mountain hiking classes, the Zen and You workshops (Gehret, 1972; Levine, 1980b; Townsend et al., 1992). Friends and foes conjure up images of caterpillars about to become butterflies; educational paradises or Gardens of Eden; classical Greek societies; and "hairy," "messy" homes for the radically inclined (Childs, 1981; Coyne & Hebert, 1972; Greening, 1981b; Martin, 1982; Von der Muhll, 1984).

In one of the more well-known conceptions, Gerald Grant and David Riesman (1978) divide experimental institutions into the "telic" (the counterrevolutionary, that is, reforms in the underlying purpose or philosophy of undergraduate education) and the "popular" (reforms in the processes, the means or delivery of higher education). Empire State College president James W. Hall (1991) categorizes innovative colleges along curricular lines (i.e., integrated or interdisciplinary, human development, and cluster models). Arthur Levine (1980b) offers a typology based on structural reform: new experimenting organizations; innovative enclaves within existing organizations; holistic and piecemeal changes; and peripheral, environmental reforms. And L. Jackson Newell and Katherine C. Reynolds (1993) place experimental or "maverick colleges" into a four-quadrant schema based on student selection (who should attend, arrayed on a continuum ranging from open to elite institutions) and educational methods (how best to integrate theoretical and practical knowledge, on a continuum ranging from campuses that

connect theory to practice at "immediate times and locations" [inside the classroom] to those that prefer to keep experiential practice distant from the classroom setting or entirely separate from the college or university program).

For the purposes of this study, "innovation" has been operationally defined as any significant departure from traditional practices in American higher education (Levine, 1980b). In this study, "innovative," "experimental," or "distinctive" colleges and universities refers to those campuses that were founded amidst the social, political, economic, and demographic transformations of the 1960s and early 1970s as alternatives to the mainstream American college or university. How do these campuses "depart" from the mainstream? Drawing on the literature, there appear to be five dimensions that "mark out the territory" of innovative institutions of higher education:

(1) Interdisciplinary teaching and learning: cross-disciplinary study and collaboration in curricular and co-curricular activity (Grant & Riesman, 1978; Newell, 1984).

(2) Student-centered education: Students engineer or "take charge of" their academic programs (e.g., students invent their own academic majors, design courses, and assist in curricular planning and development) (Adams, 1993; Grand & Bebout, 1981; Newell, 1984).

(3) Egalitarianism: participatory governance structures -- town meetings, general assemblies, and/or community forums where administrators, faculty, and students share equal voice in decision making; an absence of status symbols, such as titles and ranks; close-knit relations between faculty and students; narrative evaluations as opposed to letter grades; and cooperation and collaboration rather than competition in teaching and learning (Grant & Riesman, 1978; Hall, 1994; Kuh et al., 1991; Townsend et al., 1992).

(4) Experiential learning: Out-of-classroom projects, theses, and/or internships are integral to the academic program (Adams, 1993; Newell, 1984).

(5) An institutional focus on teaching rather than research and/or publication: There is an intensity, a spirit of vocation about teaching that "permeates these communities" (Grant & Riesman, 1978, p. 33).

While some colleges and universities today may refer to themselves as "distinctive" or "innovative," this investigation focuses specifically on those campuses that were founded as part of the educational reform movement of the 1960s and early 1970s and that typically embodied these distinctive characteristics at the time of their inception.

Research Questions

This study asks how and why do innovative colleges and universities maintain their distinctive founding missions? What keeps the dream, the spirit of reform, alive (or leads to its compromise or demise)? What do these colleges and universities, their life cycles, stories, and experiences, have to teach us about the processes of innovation and the preservation of reform efforts in higher education?

Methodology

In order to answer these questions, field visits were conducted to innovative colleges and universities across the United States. Institutional selection was based on a comprehensive review of previously published guides on alternative campuses and interdisciplinary programs in higher education (e.g., Bear, 1980; Coyne & Hebert, 1972; Heiss, 1973; Lichtman, 1972; Newell, 1986), and the readings and research on distinctive colleges and universities. Campus "nominations" were also sought through consultation with 25 nationally recognized experts on reform in higher education -- individuals who had extensive contact or association (as faculty, administrators, or researchers) with alternative colleges or universities.

Drawing on the literature review and information provided by the expert panel, a "master list" of 316 innovative institutions was generated. In order to limit the size of the master inventory, nontraditional campuses for adults, innovative colleges and universities that offered primarily external degree programs, and distance learning institutions that came into being during the 1960s and 1970s were excluded from the list (e.g., Empire State College, Metropolitan State University).[2]

Next, a "candidate list" of possible research sites was compiled from the master inventory. In order to narrow down the number of potential research sites, subcolleges and free universities were excluded from this list.[3] For ease of research and accessibility to participants in the campus communities, the list was also confined to those colleges and universities that remained open in the 1990s. The result was a list of 22 free-standing innovative institutions from which the final sample of campus sites was drawn.

Four decision rules guided the process of campus selection from the candidate list. First, every effort was made to select institutions from different regions of the country. Second, I attempted to include at least some campuses that had not been thoroughly investigated in the research literature. Third, I tried to achieve a balance between public and private ventures. Fourth, I tried to select both those institutions that seemed to have maintained their founding principles and those that appeared to have transformed themselves or moved away from their opening missions. In order to determine which institutions on the candidate list had kept hold of their alternative visions and which had not, I reviewed campus catalogs and documents (present

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[2] The master list also excluded the small number of innovative community colleges (distinctive two-year institutions that offer the associate of arts degree), upper division colleges, and graduate schools (and free-standing graduate institutions) that grew out of the '60s and '70s reform movement (Coyne & Hebert, 1972; Heiss, 1973).

[3] Subcolleges are innovative or experimental colleges that are affiliated with a larger institution. Free universities are community-centered or student-run alternative campuses that grew out of the free speech movement and that have been identified in the guidebooks and literature on free universities (e.g., Draves, 1980; Lichtman, 1972, 1973). (A free university may or may not be a subcollege of a larger institution.)

and founding year), comparing each campus today with the campus of the past. I also sought the advice of the expert panel on higher education reform.

The final sample of institutions included two small private liberal arts colleges (Pitzer and Hampshire), two small public colleges (Evergreen and New College), and two public universities (University of California, Santa Cruz and University of Wisconsin-Green Bay). Three alternate sites were also selected in the event that the proposal to participate in the research project was declined by one or more of the campuses (see **Table 1**).

Data Gathering Techniques

Interviews formed the heart of the data gathering process. At each case study site, approximately 25 fifty-minute, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the present and past players of the institution: the president or chancellor (current and founding, if available), faculty and administrators, key trustees, and selected students and active alumnae/i. Key informants were drawn from the ranks of the veteran and charter faculty and administrators, the forward-thinking planners and leaders who gave "life" to these institutions (and who remained on campus or in the vicinity).

Interviewees were identified in two ways: with the assistance of a campus liaison who had been designated by the president or chancellor to facilitate the campus visit; and through "snowball sampling" (i.e., identifying one interviewee and then asking that individual to recommend the names of others who would be able to provide additional insight into the history and endurance of campus innovation) (Dobbert, 1984). Interview participants were encouraged to reflect upon the unique nature of the college or university today and, where possible, to look back to the early days or start-up years, to think about how the institution had transformed (and/or recreated) itself.

Altogether, 151 interviews were conducted with 164 faculty, administrators, students, trustees, and alumnae/i during the six field visits. The interviews were supplemented with

Table 1
Final List of Innovative Institutions and Alternate Sites

Institution	Founding Year	Carnegie Classification[a]	Control	Location (State)	Enrollment	Writings/ Reports[b]	Presumed Status[c]
Selected Sites							
1. The Evergreen State College	1967	BA II	Public	WA	3,477	X	M
2. Hampshire College	1965	BA I	Private	MA	1,050	X	M
3. New College of the University of South Florida	1960	not listed*	Public	FL	526	X	M
4. Pitzer College	1963	BA I	Private	CA	890		NM
5. University of California, Santa Cruz	1962	Res II	Public	CA	10,173	X	NM
6. University of Wisconsin-Green Bay	1965	MA II	Public	WI	5,205		NM
Alternate Sites							
1. College of the Atlantic	1969	BA I	Private	ME	217		M
2. Ramapo College of New Jersey	1969	BA II	Public	NJ	4,683		NM
3. The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey (formerly Stockton State College)	1969	BA I	Public	NJ	5,619		NM

Table notes follow on the next page.

Notes to Table 1: Final List of Innovative Institutions and Alternate Sites

Note. The data in column 3 (Carnegie Classification) are from A Classification of Institutions of Higher Education 1994 Edition, 1994, Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The data in columns 2, 4, 5, and 6 are from the 1995 Higher Education Directory by M.P. Rodenhouse (Ed.), 1995, Falls Church, VA: Higher Education Publications.

[a] BA I = Baccalaureate I institutions, BA II = Baccalaureate II institutions, MA II = Master's II institutions, Res II = Research II institutions (A Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 1994).

[b] X = The institution has been the subject of six or more journal articles, books, chapters in edited volumes, and/or scholarly reports.

[c] M = Presumption that the institution maintained its founding principles, NM = Presumption that the institution did not maintain its founding principles. (Based on a review of the literature and current campus catalogs, and consultation with a panel of experts on innovation in American higher education.)

* The Carnegie classification for the University of South Florida is Res II.

extensive archival research and institutional document analysis, along with observations of campus activities, programs, and meetings. All interviews were tape recorded and nearly all 151 interviews were transcribed verbatim. Data were analyzed inductively both within and across case study sites.

Campus Case Study Results

Pitzer College

Pitzer College opened in 1964 as an undergraduate residential liberal arts college with a curricular emphasis on the social and behavioral sciences. Pitzer is one of six institutions of The Claremont Colleges, a distinguished consortium of private liberal arts colleges and a graduate school in Southern California. The campus was founded as a women's college, but became coeducational in 1970 as enrollment grew and planners "came to envisage Pitzer as an institution with a broader impact and appeal" (Bernard, 1982, p. 622).

The founders of Pitzer College dedicated themselves to creating a campus that would embrace the ideals of participatory governance and individualized education in a close-knit, egalitarian teaching and learning community. According to interviewees, there was a concerted effort to begin the college with as few rules as possible. Every student, every faculty member, and every staff person would have a voice in campus decision making.

At the heart of "Community Governance" at Pitzer College was the Town Meeting. Based on the model of a participatory democracy, the Town Meeting (usually held weekly) was an open, free-for-all gathering where, in the words of one long-time professor, "the whole college would get into one room essentially and discuss things." There would be heated debates and position papers, and discussions would go round and round (a phrase known to insiders as "Pitzering") until a consensus had been reached.

In addition to the ideal of participatory governance, interdisciplinarity was a hallmark of early Pitzer College's curricular offerings and research activities. In the start-up years, the faculty formed "field groups" (groupings of faculty with similar disciplinary interests) rather than traditional academic departments. The field groups had "conveners" as opposed to department chairs, and the academic budget was centrally coordinated, rather than being administered through individual field groups or disciplines (Bernard, 1982; Clary, 1970; Pitzer College Bulletin, 1963).

Today, while the founding spirit and involvement in open, participatory governance has diminished to some extent (there are no longer the weekly heated Town Meetings), Community Governance carries on at Pitzer and students continue to offer input into policy making and even faculty appointment, promotion, and tenure decisions. Pitzer College remains free of traditional disciplinary departments and the academic budget is centrally coordinated through the office of the academic dean (Pitzer College Catalogue, 1996; Rosenzweig, 1997).

Why has Pitzer been able to largely preserve its innovative founding ideals? Interviewees single out the college's unusual "institutional arrangements," its "light" hierarchical organization. They emphasize, over and over again, the importance of the campus' nondepartmentalized structure and the fact that professors are rewarded for interdisciplinary teaching. People are a "thread" at this institution, long-time faculty and staff observe, and it is the continuing presence of founding professors (and incoming cohorts who share the visions of the pioneers) that sustains the early innovative ideals. At the same time, Pitzer's connection with The Claremont Colleges, the cross-campus resource sharing and curricular opportunities, has enabled this campus to survive and to carry on as a distinctive institution.

Where there have been changes in the founding distinctive philosophies, interviewees point to the natural processes of institutional aging -- campus growth, increasing bureaucratization. In the early years, classes at Pitzer were scaled down to allow for small and intimate learning groups, interaction, and exchange. The size of the classes "encouraged . . .

participation from everyone," one early alumna stresses. Today, the campus has grown to about 680 students. "We can't all get together comfortably [as a college] anymore," a long-time faculty member explains. "You see, we went from roughly 120 students in the first year up to, well, 700 students in a few years," another early professor reports, "and it was just impossible to get everyone into one room" for, say, a Town Meeting.

At the same time, the social environment has changed. The radicalism out of which this campus was born in the 1960s is no longer, and so the kindred spirit and intensity of pioneering a brand new venture has faded. In the end, Pitzer College has moved from the 1960s to the 1990s with a few compromises, but with a sense of style and grace. The heritage of the pioneers, the spirit of small, participatory, student-centered community; of interdisciplinary education; and creative, nourishing academic pursuits, lives on in many ways in Claremont today.

New College of the University of South Florida

New College opened in 1964 as a distinctive private liberal arts college in Sarasota, Florida. In 1975, the college merged with the University of South Florida (USF), a comprehensive public research university in Tampa with branch campuses today in Fort Myers, Lakeland, and St. Petersburg.

Since its dynamic startup years, New College has been offering a unique educational program with an emphasis on student-centered learning -- students negotiate "educational contracts" each term with a faculty member to design an individualized course of study. There are no academic departments, no academic credits or units, and no letter grades at New College; all students receive written evaluations of their coursework. Faculty enjoy a tremendous amount of freedom in designing new and creative courses, and students are encouraged to work side by side with their professors as "colleagues" in the learning process (Arthur, 1995; Burns, 1994; New College, 1994; Rosenzweig, 1997).

Over the past 31 years, the institution has sustained its pioneering visions in the face of financial crisis, near closure, a merger, and a changing social, political, and economic climate. What are the key factors that have enabled this campus to preserve its distinctive early ideals? First, as in the case of Pitzer College, interviewees single out the continuing commitment of the founding and veteran faculty. The incoming cohorts of academics who share the visions of the pioneers also keep the spirit and spark of innovation alive. There are also the students who come to the college year after year in search of unorthodox and individualized educational experiences and whose energy and resourcefulness renews the founding visions.

All of this occurs in the context of an open and decentralized academic and administrative organizational structure (e.g., there are no departments, no curriculum committees and complex hierarchies at New College). Despite the "red tape" and rules imposed by the state university system, interviewees believe that the affiliation with the State (in conjunction with the work of a private fundraising foundation, the New College Foundation) has been essential for the institution's survival. In the end, it is the enduring commitment of the people here, the lively spirits who breathe life into the place, and the very unique organizational structures and partnerships between college and state, that keep this innovative college healthy and alive.

Hampshire College

Hampshire College opened in 1970 as an innovative private liberal arts college in the Pioneer Valley of Massachusetts, and is part of the Five College Consortium of institutions in the Massachusetts. The Consortium includes Hampshire College, Amherst College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. These five neighboring campuses carry out cooperative programs, share resources and library facilities, and offer intercollegiate faculty exchanges and cross-campus enrollment opportunities.

Since its inception, Hampshire College has departed from the norms of traditional higher education. The founders of the campus set out to create a college that would embrace

student-initiated or self-directed learning. Rather than traditional, credit-based requirements, students would proceed through a series of individualized "Divisions" to complete their baccalaureate work: Division I, basic studies, introduces students to the conceptual ideas and methodological tools ("modes of inquiry") of the college's four interdisciplinary Schools; in Division II, the student completes a "concentration," which is similar to a college "major;" and in Division III, the student enrolls in advanced, integrative seminars and undertakes an intensive independent project or thesis (Astin, Milem, Astin, Ries, & Heath, 1991; 1995-96 Catalog, 1995).

Hampshire College encourages active student participation in campus governance and, like New College, views undergraduates as "teachers" or colleagues with the faculty in the classroom arena. There are no grades or disciplinary departments at Hampshire, and there is no tenure system for faculty. Teaching is prized at the institution and there is a tremendous amount of freedom for faculty to engage in curricular experimentation and team teaching. Interdisciplinary education remains a hallmark of the Hampshire education and students are encouraged to pursue cross-disciplinary projects and divisional work (Alpert, 1980; Astin et al., 1991; Birney, 1993; Patterson & Longsworth, 1966; Rosenzweig, 1997).

Hampshire has, on the whole, kept alive its innovative early missions. In the 1990s, "Morale is high, excitement continues," writes Charles R. Longsworth (1992), the founding vice president and second president of Hampshire College, "and the fundamental ideas on which Hampshire was built are still in place" (p. 123). Drawing on the results of the campus interviews and archival research, what are the key factors that have enabled this campus to sustain its pioneering principles?

First, interviewees, here again, single out the dedication of the founding and long-time faculty. The Hampshire vision is "infectious," and is passed along by the faculty pioneers to latter generations of academics and students who keep alive the early missions of the founders. The decentralized organization of the institution, too, with its multidisciplinary Schools and absence of

academic departments, has, once more, paved the way for longlasting interdisciplinary innovation and spirited teaching and learning. Above all, it may be Hampshire's association with the Five College Consortium of institutions in the Pioneer Valley that has enabled this one-of-a-kind campus to carry on as an innovative college for the last two and a half decades.

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay opened in 1969 with an emphasis on the environment and interdisciplinary, problem-focused education. The founders of the university believed that conventional disciplinary fields should be subordinate to interdisciplinary areas of study and inquiry. Undergraduates at the early university would major in an interdisciplinary concentration, although they could "co-major" in a disciplinary field (Weidner & Kuepper, 1993).

Experiential learning and outreach to the community were integral to the initial academic programs of UW-Green Bay. There was a strong emphasis on student-initiated education or students actively shaping or taking charge of their own learning processes. Undergraduate teaching was considered to be the faculty member's primary activity, and the campus would foster close-knit relationships between professors and students (Lane et al., 1968; Rosenzweig, 1997; Weidner, 1977; 1994).

While much of the original, distinctive mission of the campus has faded (gone, for example, is the environmental focus, gone is the emphasis on individualized learning, and gone is the experiential education component), UW-Green Bay continues, at least in part, to honor its roots of experimentation. The central organizing academic units on campus continue to be the interdisciplinary departments, which have authority over academic budgets, curricular policy, and faculty appointments (Brown, 1974; Rice & Bremer, 1994; Rosenzweig, 1997; Weidner & Kuepper, 1993).

What are the factors that have enabled UW-Green Bay to preserve its interdisciplinary organization and principles? Interviewees emphasize over and over again the importance of the

campus' budgeted interdisciplinary departments as the key to the endurance of the interdisciplinary educational mission. At the same time, here again, they cite the presence of a critical mass or core group of founding faculty and administrators who have remained at the institution and who have kept the founding spirit of interdisciplinarity and educational innovation alive in their creative leadership, scholarship, and teaching.

When it comes to the changes or transformations in the founding distinctive philosophies, interviewees point to shifts in the attitudes and interests of the student generations, increasing student-to-faculty ratios, and institutional efforts to accommodate the disciplinary and professional needs of the local community. They also make reference to the budgetary cutbacks imposed by the State of Wisconsin, and University of Wisconsin System-wide pressures to conventionalize programs, academic reward structures, and curriculum (Rosenzweig, 1997).

University of California, Santa Cruz

University of California, Santa Cruz opened in the fall of 1965 in the foothills of Santa Cruz overlooking Monterey Bay and the Pacific Ocean. The founders sought to create a "collegiate university," one that would run counter to the isolation and impersonality of the large, monolithic "multiversity." In order to foster a sense of belonging and close-knit community among students and faculty, the planners established a series of small residential cluster Colleges. These Colleges were designed to function as personal, interdisciplinary, teaching communities that would coexist along with the university's research-oriented disciplinary "departments" or boards of study (Grant & Riesman, 1978; McHenry, 1977; Von der Muhll, 1984).

Early students at the Santa Cruz campus were encouraged to take charge of their own learning, to pursue individualized majors, and to design their own courses and independent studies projects (Undergraduate Program, 1965). Instead of conventional letter grades, students would receive written evaluations of their coursework. There was a firm commitment to

interdisciplinary teaching and learning in College-based courses and faculty co-teaching (McHenry, 1977).

While the residential, collegial organization of the university remains an integral feature of the institution today, and while UC Santa Cruz continues to offer narrative evaluations (along with a letter grade option) for students, the early interdisciplinary teaching and student-centered ethos has, for the most part, disappeared. The campus was radically reorganized in the late 1970s to embrace disciplinary research and the conventional standards and practices of the University of California system (Adams, 1984; Grant & Riesman, 1978; McHenry, 1977; Rosenzweig, 1997; Von der Muhll, 1984).

In discussing the reasons for the changes at the university, nearly all interviewees point to the shifts in the economy, severe budgetary cutbacks, a faculty reward structure that emphasizes academic research, and shifts in the attitudes and interests of students and faculty. The tensions implicit in the dual organization of the early Colleges and boards of studies, the enrollment downturns of the 1970s, and pressures and standards imposed by the UC system, all resulted in the radical restructuring of the university. Santa Cruz today is an institution of excellence and high standing, according to interviewees, but it is not the campus of which its founders dreamed.

The Evergreen State College

The Evergreen State College opened in 1971 as an innovative public liberal arts college in Olympia, Washington. The cornerstone of the Evergreen curriculum is the Coordinated Studies program. Coordinated Studies are full-time, team-taught, multidisciplinary programs involving about 4 to 5 faculty members and 80 to 100 students. The curriculum is constantly changing or being "reinvented" in order to ensure a continuing sense of excitement in teaching (Kuh et al., 1991; Youtz, 1984).

Individualized learning is a cherished and longlasting ideal of the Evergreen community. Students are placed at the center of the educational process and are considered to be co-learners

with the faculty in the teaching experience. There are no required courses, no majors, no faculty ranks, no academic departments, and no grades at Evergreen. Experiential, out-of-classroom learning is integral to the educational philosophy of the institution and teaching remains at the heart of faculty life. Academics at Evergreen are evaluated on the basis of a portfolio of cumulative teaching experiences. The portfolio includes self-evaluations and evaluations from students and colleagues in team-taught programs (Faculty Handbook, 1997; Rosenzweig, 1997).

Campus governance processes are flexible and participatory at Evergreen. In order to prevent power-wielding structures from "penetrating" the college, Evergreen's founders created temporary ad-hoc committees (called "Disappearing Task Forces" or DTFs) that involve students, faculty, and staff in consensus decision making. The DTFs, which continue to function as the primary vehicle for college governance today, address a single problem or task, and when the work of the group is completed, disband or disappear (Clemens, 1987; Constancy and Change, 1989; The Evergreen State College Bulletin 1972-73, 1972; Rosenzweig, 1997; Youtz, 1984).

What are the key factors that have enabled this maverick college to sustain its pioneering principles in a rapidly changing socio-political and economic environment? What has kept the innovative educational philosophies alive at Evergreen? Like their counterparts at the other institutions, interviewees at Evergreen single out the continuing presence and dedication of early faculty. A remarkable number of the founders have remained on the faculty of the college. In 1995-1996, at the time of the field visit, 30 of the 58 original faculty members and academic deans (more than 50 percent of the charter faculty) continued to teach at Evergreen. Forty-one percent of all regular, full-time faculty in 1995-96 had been employed at Evergreen for at least 25 years. The founding president of the college, Charles J. McCann, also continued to serve as an emeritus member of the faculty (The Evergreen State College 1996-97 Catalog, 1996).

Interviewees also report that the new faculty cohorts at Evergreen are recruited for their interest in collaborative, interdisciplinary teaching. The students who select to attend the college

also sustain the campus' cooperative, interdisciplinary learning missions. In addition, Evergreen, like many of the other campuses, remains free of rigid and hierarchical organizational structures, which allows for a continuing a sense of vitality in teaching, an openness and freedom to experiment.

Above all, it may be Evergreen's later founding date that has enabled this campus to endure as a distinctive public institution. The college opened in 1971, at the very end of the alternative higher education movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The planners, thus, had the advantage of learning from the earlier educational experiments. When it came time to recruit faculty, they brought in individuals who had experience at other innovative institutions. "It is notable," write Richard M. Jones and Barbara Leigh Smith (1984), how many Evergreen faculty came to Olympia via Old Westbury, Santa Cruz and similar institutions" (p. 44). Charter faculty member Byron L. Youtz (1984) explains: "The war stories of these veterans considerably tempered our wilder dreams" (p. 96).

Cross-Campus Results and Implications

Each of the campuses in this study has at some point in its history dared to be different, to be a maverick, a rebel. Three decades since the dawn of the alternative higher education movement, and some of these institutions are still rebelling, while others have settled into a more traditional or conventional pattern of being. Looking back over the results of the campus case studies, what are the overall lessons to be learned in the 1990s? What are the implications of the lives and lessons of these six institutions for future innovators and leaders of distinctive colleges and universities? What are the implications of the findings for the larger higher education community? These questions are addressed in the two sections that follow.

Implications for Innovative Institutions of Higher Education

What are the factors that enable a distinctive institution to maintain its original unorthodox values in a changing social, political, and economic climate? Linking together the cross-campus themes, I offer the following guidelines and strategies for ensuring longlasting innovation in distinctive institutions of higher education:

- **Retain Founding Faculty**

First, in order to ensure that innovative ideals are passed down from one generation to the next, distinctive campuses should seek to retain a significant number of founding faculty members until the time of their retirements. In this study, interviewees singled out the presence and the dedication of charter faculty members as integral to the success and longevity of innovation. The veteran scholars were often hailed as the faithful supporters and advocates of the original distinctive missions of the institutions. Even at those campuses that had, for the most part, abandoned their innovative principles, it was, again, the commitment of the founding faculty that sustained the innovations that did remain in place. At the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, for example, an institution that has in many ways succumbed to external, state-wide pressures to conventionalize, the founding faculty and administrators are the guiding forces in preserving the campus' interdisciplinary organization. At UC Santa Cruz, an institution that has embraced conventionalism since its free-wheeling start-up era, there is still a sense that the veteran faculty (only a handful of whom remained at the institution) keep alive the early spirit and ideals, especially with regard to the narrative evaluation system.

The lesson to be learned is that innovative campuses should provide opportunities for interaction among charter professors and other academic cohorts (e.g., team teaching, educational workshops or roundtable discussions). This will help to ensure that the vision, the dream endures.

- **Passing the Torch: Recruit New Faculty and Administrators Who are Committed to Innovation**

Second, if innovative campuses are to maintain their imaginative principles or philosophies, it is critical that they recruit and retain faculty and administrators who value the distinctive ideals and missions of the institution. At nearly all of the institutions in this study, the distinctive heritage of the pioneers was perpetuated by the incoming cohorts of faculty and the new administrators who shared the founders' passion and spirit for innovation and who had been drawn to the college or university because of its alternative mission. Recruitment will be especially important in the academic arena as most of these campuses seek to replace the majority of their founding faculty members in the coming decades.

- **Establish Reward Systems that Value Innovation**

Third, academic reappointment, promotion, and tenure systems that reward innovative approaches to teaching and curriculum development appear to be critical to sustaining innovation. In this study, those campuses that have been most successful in sustaining their early interdisciplinary teaching approaches have rewarded faculty for engaging in cross-disciplinary or creative teaching endeavors. At Pitzer College, for example, one of the key criteria in academic advancement and tenure decisions is successful joint teaching. At Evergreen, creative, team-taught seminars and interdisciplinary approaches are perpetuated by a faculty reappointment system that values excellence in teaching and interdisciplinary education. If creative, interdisciplinary teaching and learning approaches are to flourish at distinctive institutions, then faculty members must be actively supported and rewarded for innovative teaching and program development.

- **Provide Open and Flexible Structures**

Fourth, open or flexible organizational structures are essential for ensuring the success of distinctive educational approaches and decision making. Based on the results of the case studies, institutions should strive to keep administrative hierarchies, academic committees, and disciplinary departments to a minimum. Governance structures should remain open and participatory. Faculty members should be given the freedom to experiment, to engage in creative approaches to teaching and scholarship, as at Pitzer College and Evergreen. Students should be granted the space to design their own curricular pathways, to invent their own courses, majors, and/or independent study projects. Anti-hierarchical, non-departmental arrangements allow for curricular experimentation and pedagogic risk-taking.

- **Affiliate with a Consortium or Other Institutions**

Fifth, affiliation with a consortium or larger group of institutions seems to prolong the life of an innovative college or university. Pitzer College, for example, has benefited from its association with five other solidly established liberal arts colleges and a graduate school in the Claremont Consortium. The campus would never have been able to overcome early financial difficulties and keep the doors of the college open, interviewees explain, without the tremendous resources and support of The Claremont Colleges. Hampshire College, likewise, has persevered because of its ties to a renowned consortium of institutions in the Pioneer Valley of Massachusetts.

New and existing innovative campuses should seek out opportunities for affiliation with a consortium of institutions or neighboring colleges and universities. Opportunities will vary, of course, from one setting to another, but this kind of inter-institutional collaboration and exchange offers the small distinctive campus access to a wealth of information, resources, and shared facilities at other, more traditional or established institutions. The other campuses, in turn, benefit

from the creative approaches, interdisciplinary teaching, and curricular activities of the innovative institution. It is a healthy partnership for all.

- **Recruit Faculty with Experience at Other Innovative Campuses**

Sixth, the founders and planners of distinctive institutions should recruit charter faculty and administrators with experience at innovative colleges or universities. Hampshire and Evergreen were both able to avoid some of the dangers that led to the downfall of other experimental colleges and universities of their generation by recruiting teams of faculty who were familiar with the struggles and challenges of alternative higher education institutions.

- **Keeping it Small: Low Student-to-Faculty Ratios**

Seventh, distinctive colleges and universities should seek to maintain a relatively low student-to-faculty ratio. When an institution grows and if student-faculty ratios increase, there is often a sense of loss of the intimate, personalized feeling and engagement in the learner-centered ideals of the distinctive college or university. At the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, for example, the early individualized curriculum and the opportunities for close-knit interactions between faculty and students largely disappeared as the proportion of students to faculty on campus rose in recent decades. At UC Santa Cruz, the founding spirit of undergraduate teaching in a face-to-face learning community was also sacrificed as enrollments grew and the student-to-faculty ratios increased. Those institutions that have been most successful in preserving their individualized curricular programs and distinctive educational approaches (e.g., New College, Evergreen) are those that have been able to maintain a relatively low student-to-faculty ratio.

General Implications for the Higher Education Community

- **Recognizing the Need for Alternatives in Higher Education**

Now having examined the implications of the research findings for innovative colleges and universities, what are the general implications of the results for the wider higher education community? First, this study turns our attention to the importance of providing alternatives, creative and nourishing educational places and spaces for students and scholars who are seeking unique, person-centered classrooms and programs in American higher education. The six campuses in this investigation are six islands of educational difference, each having evolved over the decades with at least some key elements of its original distinctive principles intact.

One of the major lessons to be learned from this investigation is that traditional methods of higher education are not the sole means of educating all students, and are not the most effective or appropriate strategies for all learners. Innovative colleges and universities fill a distinct niche in the higher education community, offering refuges for those who are dissatisfied with the mainstream practices and approaches of conventional higher education. They produce graduates who are successful entrepreneurs and leaders with an imaginative heart and spirit. Higher education would do wise to recognize and reward innovative campuses for their "genius." Philanthropical foundations and agencies should follow the lead of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, which recently awarded grants of $750,000 apiece to six innovative liberal arts campuses (Alverno College, Antioch College, College of the Atlantic, Hampshire College, Johnson C. Smith University, and Marlboro College). These one-time grants were offered as part of a $5.9 million initiative to show support for distinctive institutions of higher education. In the words of Woodward A. Wickham, Director of the MacArthur Foundation general grants program, "Parents are increasingly asking whether this kind of education is worth

it. With these grants we wanted to say that it is absolutely worth it, and to help insure that liberal arts and these innovative colleges and others like them flourish" (Arenson, 1996, p. B9).

- **Promotion**

In visiting distinctive campuses, you get the sense that you are uncovering a hidden jewel or undiscovered treasure in American higher education. Nation-wide promotional strategies are needed to raise awareness about these unique teaching and learning communities. Educational organizations and professional associations should sponsor conferences and institutes on the topic of innovative higher education, where teams of participants from distinctive campuses across the country can gather to present their teaching and learning approaches. Joint research reports and local or regional workshops are also essential for building connections and providing networking opportunities across this family of creative institutions. National respect, recognition, and appreciation for the innovative sector of higher education is critical for combatting stereotypes and for ensuring the survival of alternative colleges and universities.

- **Models and Practices**

Many higher education institutions today are searching for creative strategies to improve or revitalize their teaching and learning environments. In these difficult budgetary times, when it may be impossible to develop new programs or campuses, mainstream colleges and universities should look to the practices of innovative colleges and universities and consider the merits of their unique approaches -- for example, narrative evaluation systems, portfolio assessment for faculty. Evergreen's Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education has made excellent strides in transmitting the Coordinated Studies model to colleges and universities throughout the State of Washington. There are currently 46 colleges and universities participating in Washington Center programs, including all of Washington State's public four-year institutions and community colleges, 10 independent colleges, and one tribal college (The Evergreen State

College 1997-98 Catalog, 1997). Similar centers or offshoots could be founded across the nation to guide or assist traditional institutions in incorporating alternative, student-centered teaching and learning techniques.

Suggestions for Future Research

The study of innovative colleges and universities is an important and relatively undeveloped area of contemporary research. There are a number of ways in which future investigators could expand upon the findings of the present investigation by exploring additional issues or aspects of these very unusual and interesting institutions.

First, in order to broaden the findings of this investigation, qualitative research studies of the history and persistence of innovation should be conducted at other four-year distinctive institutions of the 1960s and 1970s. Investigators should examine the experiences of distinctive community colleges, nontraditional institutions for adults, and experimental subcolleges to understand how these campuses have evolved in a changing social, political, and economic climate. Further research could also be conducted at public innovative campuses to determine how issues of affiliation or control impact the life and longevity of other state-supported distinctive colleges and universities.

A scholarly comparison of the experiences of the six distinctive campuses in this study with those of the older experimental colleges of the late 19th and early 20th century (e.g., Antioch College, Reed College, Deep Springs College) could yield important insights. What are the lessons to be learned about the history and transformation of innovation from the older and progressive-era innovative campuses, and how do these results compare and contrast with findings of the current investigation? These are important questions for future researchers.

There are a host of other important topics and concerns that deserve consideration in the writings about institutional reform in higher education. Future studies are needed to examine

topics such as student and faculty life in the distinctive campus, alumnae/i outcomes and success, issues of student attrition and retention, faculty burnout, and faculty immobility. One important area for further investigation is the topic of institutional maturity. Future research is needed to determine how the aging or maturation of an innovative college or university (the lifecycle of the campus from its newborn phase to its "adolescent" and "adult" years) impacts the endurance of distinctive missions.

Institutional researchers should also turn their attention to the study of financial concerns and leadership issues, as well as multiculturalism and diversity in the innovative college or university. Future investigators should conduct in-depth studies of the governance processes, the nongraded or narrative evaluation systems, and the student-centered curricular models at these creative campuses to understand how these approaches could be applied or utilized in other college or university settings. There is much to be learned from the imaginative practices and programs of the innovative colleges and universities. The research pathways are open and this investigator invites others to join the journey.

Future Outlook

We are all the inheritors of the higher education revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. The future of the innovative college and university is in our hands and in the hands of tomorrow's campus visionaries. It will be up to the coming generations of reformers, kindred leaders, and educational rebels to preserve these distinctive institutions and to build new islands of educational difference.

Where there is room for empowering, learner-centered classrooms where students rise above conventional, competitive grading systems, there is room for the innovative campus. Where there is openness to egalitarian and participatory decision making, to communal togetherness, to a oneness among students and teachers, there is openness to the distinctive

college or university. Where there is space for crossing over into new multidisciplinary fields of thought and inquiry, where rich frameworks and theories are imaginatively integrated, there is space for the alternative institution. And where there is hope for an education that will empower our children and our children's children to create and to follow their own academic pathways and dreams, there is hope, there is a future for the innovative college and university.

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